

*Christian Religion the best Friend to
Civil Government.*

A
S E R M O N

Preach'd at

STAFFORD,

Before Mr. Justice BLENCOW
and Mr. Baron PRICE,

A T T H E

ASSIZES held there *Aug. 21, 1717.*

By JOHN LAURENCE, M. A. Rector
of Yelvertoft in Northamptonshire.

*Publiſh'd at the Request of the High Sberiff, the Juſtices of
the Peace, and Gentlemen of the Grand Jury.*

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SERMON

Preached at

STAFFORD

Before the Honble the Justices of the Peace
and the Honble the Mayor



At the City of London

By JOHN AINSWORTH, M.A.

Curate of the Church of St. Andrew, in the City of London

Printed by J. BARNES, at the Office of the British Museum, in the Strand

1817

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T O
JOHN TURTON, *Esq;*
High Sheriff of the County of
STAFFORD.

Honoured Sir,

YOU are too *wise* to bear the usual Flattery of a Dedication, and too *good* to need it. I am therefore only led here to say; I am perswaded the same hearty Zeal for your Country's Good and Loyalty to your Prince, which hath carried you through a publick Station with much Honour and Reputation in the most difficult Times, hath also in some measure disposed you to think so favourably of this Discourse, as to desire the Publication of it.

I am much the rather inclined to comply with your Request, and the Re-

Dedication.

quest of those other worthy Gentlemen that heard it, as it gives me here an Opportunity to acknowledge with Gratitude the many singular Favours I have received from you. And if the Sermon itself happen to contribute any thing towards a quiet and peaceable Submission to our excellent King, such as both the Laws of God and Men require, This, I am satisfied, will most of all answer the End of your Request, and will be the greatest Satisfaction to,

S I R,

Your most obliged

humble Servant,

JOHN LAURENCE.

A N
ASSIZE-SERMON

Preach'd at
STAFFORD.

Rom. xiii. 4.

----- *For he beareth not the Sword
in vain.*

The whole Verse thus.

*For he is the Minister of God to thee for
Good: But if thou do that which is Evil,
be affraid; for he beareth not the Sword
in vain; For he is the Minister of God,
a Revenger to execute Wrath upon him
that doth Evil.*

M Agistracy and Ministry being the
strengthening as well as adorning
Pillars of the Common-wealth of Man-
kind, those rash People or blind *Sampsons*,

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that set their Shoulders to remove these Supports, do nothing else but pluck certain Ruin upon their own Heads: For as Magistrates are the Pillars, that keep the World from falling into Anarchy and Confusion; so Ministers are the Lights, that God hath set up to preserve it from Ignorance, Atheism, and Superstition. For which Purpose both *St. Paul* and *St. Peter* do so fully and Emphatically describe the divine Original of both Governments, both to *enforce* and to *facilitate* Obedience; that we may learn to obey and be subject to those, who are set over us in *Church* and *State*.

For though the End of all civil Power be to preserve Peace and Property, and the End of all Ecclesiastical Power be (to be sure, not to disturb the State, but) to promote the Purity and Salvation of Christ's Members; yet because, either thro' Passion and Revenge, Ambition or Avarice, Men oftentimes do not, or will not regard their truest Interest, therefore it is observable, that the Apostle here in this Chapter (which is to my present purpose) binds *civil* Obedience and Subjection upon People by a double

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double Sanction: *Wherefore* (saith he) *ye must needs be subject, not only for Wrath,* that is, Out of fear of the Magistrate's power; *but also for Conscience sake;* for this very reason, because *they are God's Ministers,* and because *the Powers that be are ordained of God.* Intimating plainly, that if the fear of danger from the civil Power will not restrain Men's Lusts and Passions; yet surely the Dread of an invisible Power, and the Threatnings of the Gospel bound upon the Conscience, should mightily influence those, who call themselves Christians, to pay a peaceable and quiet Submission to *the Powers that are* in being: Or in short, that Christians should make a Conscience of obeying those, from whom they receive Protection; because though *the manner of governing,* and the *choice of Governors* be an *human Ordinance,* [*ἡ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἀρχὴ*] yet the Power is from God.

Whereby we are informed, that every Person, let him be of what Rank, and in what Station he will, rich or poor, Servant or Master, Clergy or Laity, is obliged in

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duty to be subject to the *civil Power*, in matters of a *civil nature*.

Which teaches us also by the way, that Christ is a Friend to *Cesar*, and Christianity no Enemy to true Loyalty, and the just Rights of Princes; who never appear more truly God's Deputies and Ministers, than when they answer the End of Government, in the preservation of Peace and Property. Accordingly it may be observed, that the best Christians are always the best Subjects, and none so true to their Prince, as those that are most faithful to their God.

But as I said, because Men always *do not*, or *will not* regard their Duty and their truest Interest, we are given to understand here in my Text, that the Magistrate *beareth not the Sword in vain*.

In which words there are plainly two Parts to be considered distinctly.

I. A Concession of Power in Magistrates, which God hath put into their Hands. *As the Minister of God, he beareth a Sword.*

II. A further Explication of that Power and Authority. He beareth it *not in vain*.

I. Here

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1. Here is a Concession of Power and Authority in Magistrates, which God hath put into their hands. *He is the Minister of God, and bears a Sword.* He has a Sword put into his hand by God himself, as an Ensign of Terror to evil Doers. As the *Romans* used to carry Swords, Axes, and Rods before their Magistrates, in token of their Power and Authority over guilty and wicked Persons, to suppress Licentiousness; to keep the World in Awe; and to preserve Order, Property, and Peace.

Now from the Concession here in my Text, I shall beg leave *upon this Occasion* to speak to these two Things, which I easily suppose every one will allow to be proper Subjects to be handled before such an Audience.

First, The advantage and absolute Necessity of a civil power over Men's Bodies and Estates. And

Secondly, That the Christian Religion is the best Friend and greatest Assistant to all civil Governments. Both which Points are plainly deducible from *St. Paul's* Arguings and Exhortations in this Chapter.

But

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But shall I (*First*) have any need, under such a happy Constitution as ours, and in such a civilized place as this, to shew the necessity of good Government, whilst You All daily experience the Blessing and advantage of it? I am perswaded you are most of ye beforehand with me in concluding, that Government, as it is God's Ordinance, so it is Man's great Advantage and Comfort: Though I am apt to think it is *here*, as in *most other* the like cases; we are never so sensibly touch'd with the Blessing, as when we come to be so unhappy as to feel the Want of it.

But, blessed be God, though *that* is far from being our present Condition; yet because there are, at all times and in all places, many rash, wicked, and daring Spirits, hurried on, either by Revenge, Covetousness, or Ambition, to attempt the disturbance of civil Government, under the popular Pretence of mistaken *Liberty* on the one hand, or of an *indefeazible Right* in one particular Family to govern on the other, it may not be amiss to give one short View of the present Felicity we enjoy under

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der a settled Government; that you may know how to value it, and at the same time use your utmost Endeavours to preserve it, from all dangerous Attempts of destroying or disturbing it.

The Necessity of a civil Power over Men's Bodys and Estates, of *the Magistrate's bearing a Sword*, appears plainly from hence; because without it, neither Peace nor Property could be preserved in any Government, publick Instructions and Exhortations proving but a dead Letter to the most corrupt Part of Mankind. Wherefore St. Paul gives the Christians at Rome to understand, that the supreme Governor *bears a Sword* by the divine Authority, and for that reason it became their duty to submit to publick Determinations; Otherwise as he bore a Sword, so he did *not bear it in vain*; but would exercise it in Wrath upon him that doth evil.

However to sweeten this Precept, that might seem harsh to some, he tells them in my Text, that as *he is the Minister of God*, so he is his Minister *for Good*; For good Ends and purposes; For the good
of

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of his People; For increasing the Happiness and Comfort of Society.

And what a Blessing is this to Mankind? That Kings and Rulers have a Power derived from God to reform the World; to preserve humane Nature from running wild and savage; to cure men's wicked Dispositions; to curb their insatiable Appetites; to punish evil Doers; to praise and encourage them that do well. And yet all this, and much more is included in the Blessing that attends those, who live under a wise and well established Government.

Indeed the Reward of Peace and Security, by means of a happy Government, each man doth in some measure receive, every time he lyes down in safety, every time he eats his morsel in quiet; And if *Judah and Israel dwell safely, every man under his own Vine and under his own Fig-tree*, what is this but the Effect of wise Laws and good Governors, that cause *peace on all sides round about them?* 1 Kings IV. 24, 25.

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Indeed to represent Man's Governor and God's Minister, as one that acts with an arbitrary Power and a tyrannick Self-Will; that prostitutes his delegated Authority to his own private Avarice or Ambition; to fancy him like some unreasonable fond Man, that has grasped Power into his hands by Conquest, Not by the Choice and (a) Recognition of the People, but by fortune starting up into a Throne, only to make Sport with his Inferiors, rewarding and punishing without regard to Good or Evil; This is to lay a Reproach upon the sacred Office, and to suppose the highest Injury done to humane

(a) *If the Bible be the Rule, by which we are to judge of the proper Rights of Kings, whereby to challenge the Obedience and Subjection of the People, That all along directs us to the free Choice, Consent, or Recognition of a Nation. There we meet with no Pretension to an indefeazible Right of Primogeniture to govern; but the unanimous Voice or Recognition of the People is constantly made the proper Foundation of the Rights of Princes to their Crowns.*

Upon which account it is surprizing to find modern Christians to set up political Schemes of their own, built upon the imaginary Principle of I know not what hereditary Right; introducing thereby an arbitrary power and Tyranny over the Libertys and Consciences of Mankind, just as if there had been no such Book as the holy Bible written for the guide and direction of Mankind, as to their temporal as well as eternal Happiness.

Nature.

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Nature. This would make men *sigh* and *groan* under Tyranny, and tempt Subjects to cast off the Yoke, either to change their Governor, or to live desperately without Law or Government in evil Courses.

But now the Apostle gives us a more comfortable View than this; He tells us, *he is the Minister of God for good*; i. e. (As the Piety of our Liturgy expresses it) *He studys to preserve the People committed to his Charge in wealth, peace, and Godliness.* In short, we are to look upon our Governor, as One that resembles *Him* from whom he receives his Authority and Commission, that is good and just, and a Terror to all sorts of evil Doers; One that is a faithful Guardian of Property, the Protectour of Innocence, and the Patron of Virtue; which is the very Argument the Apostle uses to recommend and endear Obedience to Christians.

Neither are we to mistake the Apostle so far, as to think, when he gives us such a high Character of a Ruler, that he forms to himself and describes to others only the Imaginary Idea of a Governor;
such

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such as the World may rather *fancy* and *wish for*, than ever *hope to enjoy*. No, without question, he gives us the Definition of such an one, as the divine Goodness hath often bless'd Mankind withall.

Nay, did not wilful Blindness and Prejudice pervert the Judgment of too many amongst us, it would easily be discerned, and as universally acknowledged, that we have a Prince now reigning over us, (and God grant he may long reign!) than whom it is hard to imagine any one more inclined or better qualified to make us a happy People; whose great Judgment, Wisdom, and Experience in the Art of Government, joyned to his Exemplary Goodness, Tenderness, and Compassion, render him lovely in the Eyes of a free People, and despicable to None but those, who court Slavery and Tyrants.

A feeling Sense of the Blessing of a wise Governor *ought* to extort such Acknowledgments; Neither can they be called Flattery, because his Character is transmitted to us from abroad, where he was highly esteemed by all his Neighbours, and universally beloved by all his Subjects.

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In saying of this, I do not apprehend that I have in the least left my Argument, which supposes the Apostle in this Chapter to give a Character of a wise and a good Governor; such as not only *should be* so in Intention of Office and Duty; but what *is* and hath been so in the real Experience of Mankind.

In plain truth, did their Goodness lye only in the Administration of Justice between Man and Man; in the Protection of Innocence and Right; in freeing Men from Rapine and Bloodshed, *this* would justify the Apostle's Character of a *Minister for Good*, and make his Argument to Obedience perswasive; for *these*, the Apostle tells us, are all owing to their Care and Vigilance; *They attend* (saith he, ver. 6) *continually on this very thing*: which makes them truly Blessings to Society, and Benefactors to Mankind.

I will not pretend, within the Limits of a Sermon, to recount the various Blessings that must attend that People, who have a wise Governor that *bears a Sword*; much less to shew you particularly the Necessity

cessity and Usefulness of humane Laws; either in order to enforce the Laws of God, and to oblige those to be governable and *subject for wrath*, that will not be so *for Conscience sake*, or in order to secure and determine every Man's Right and Property: It may be sufficient to my present Argument to observe, that We, of all others in the World, have least reason to think Government a Yoke; whilst our Lives, our Estates, and our true Liberties are so happily guarded on all sides, and we have wise Laws to defend us from Licentiousness on the one hand, and Tyranny on the other; Both which are so dangerous to true Liberty and Property, to the Peace both of Church and State.

Nothing indeed is more apt to be mistaken than *true Liberty*; which, when rightly understood, is certainly one of the greatest Blessings and Privileges of humane Nature. For it is not properly a Power of doing what *we will*, but of doing with Safety and pleasure what *we should will*, what *becomes us* to act and do, as Christians and reasonable Creatures made for Society: But a Liber-

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ty of acting *absolutely* all that a Man has a mind to, *what soever seems right in his own Eyes*, without Law or Government, what is this but more properly *Licentiousness*? which under a popular Notion hath so often brought upon Mankind all the miserable Calamitys of mistaken Freedom.

In truth, such a lawless Liberty as this, is not so much as indulged even our Governor himself; inasmuch as it is such a Liberty as a good Prince would not desire, and a bad one ought not to be trusted with; which is that which makes our Constitution so truly valuable and precious to those, who contend only for *just Liberty*, and know the Worth of *written Laws* too well, to desire that either Prince, or People should live *without Law*.

The divine Providence hath been marvelously good and gracious to Us; not only in putting us under an easie and truly *English* Government, but in preserving it to us: A Government, that knows no Rule but our Laws, nor any other End but the Peace and Prosperity of our Country; the Safety and Protection of our Persons; the

Pre-

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Preservation of our Rights and Libertys; and above all, the Encouragement of Virtue, and the upholding the protestant Interest. Whilst therefore it remains an undeniable truth, that Subjects have their Rights, as well as Princes their Prerogatives, it becomes the Duty, as well as Interest of a brave People, to support their known Rights, and to defend themselves against the Encroachments of Oppressors. Otherwise, if a whole Nation must tamely suffer themselves to be made a Prey to one of their Fellow-Creatures, and be devoured by those, who are of the same kind with themselves; then the true Value of Liberty; the just and proper Use of Power; the Obligations of those that are in Authority; and the natural as well as civil Rights of those that are under it, are All but *Empty Names* of Things, bare imaginary Principles and Privileges, wherewith Mankind is only deceived and deluded. But yet, let slavish Flatterers pretend what they please, these are valuable Blessings, worth contending for and preserving; And wise Men will always think *that Prince, who bears a Sword, which the*

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Laws put into his Hands, is the only true Governor of his People.

Which Consideration naturally leads me to take Notice of and admire the wise Provision, that is made by our Constitution for the Execution of these its most excellent Laws; that they may not prove only a *dead Letter*, but may have their designed Effect, and answer the End for which they were made.

To prevent therefore the difficulty of having constant recourse to the Throne, Justice is brought home in a manner to our own Doors, and thus twice in a Year makes, as it were, a solemn *Procession* through the Land, inviting all those who are aggrieved, to come for help, and inflicting actual Punishment on the lawless and disobedient.

These visible Advantages, (and the invisible ones are infinite) of the Execution of our Laws we see with pleasure: For to the awful Presence of you, my Lords, on these Occasions, is owing that greater Security and peace, which we enjoy all the Year after; And these solemn Assemblies doubtless strike Terrour into those, that might
be

be inclined at all times to disturb our Dwellings and the Nation's quiet.

This may serve to shew the *Necessity*, as well as *Advantage* of a Magistrate's bearing a Sword, of a coercive power to set bounds to unreasonable Desires, and to force Men to be governable.

But least it should be said, that all this might be effected purely by the Penalties of humane Laws, I shall now shew you very briefly, what becomes me as a Divine to shew

Secondly, *That the Christian Religion is the best Friend and greatest Assistant to all civil Government*, by enabling the Magistrate to *bear the Sword* with greater Pleasure, Security and Ease. For

1. It hath founded Obedience upon the firmest and most enduring Foundation, the Principle of CONSCIENCE. *Wherefore* (saith the Apostle in this Chap.) *ye must needs be subject not only for wrath, but also for CONSCIENCE sake.* That is to say, Not only for fear of the Magistrate's Power; but also for the sake of your Duty and Conscience, which binds Obedience upon you

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more strongly; inasmuch as *he is the Minister of God*: And St. Peter's Argument is just the same. *Submit your selves---for the Lord's Sake---for so is the Will of God.*

1 Pet. ii. 13, 15.

Indeed, all the politick Arts of governing Men's rude Passions signifie little, in comparison of the strong Tyes of Conscience, and the Fence of religious Obligations: For though the Necessitys of Nature may *incline*, nay *compel* Men, though never so rude, into some kind of Order Yet if once Conscience be laid aside, and Religion banished out of Men's Minds, Government would soon become a tottering and unsteady thing.

This is so plain and evident, that the Governors of all Perswasions in Religion are sensible of it; whilst they dare not trust to their own *Power* in the Case; but are forced to fetch in the *Aids* of Religion to support their Thrones, lined with Cares, Fears, and Jealousys. And though we should suppose *some* not very forward to believe, or overfond of practising Religion *themselves*; yet they take all imaginable

ginable Care to instill and cherish it in the Minds of their Subjects, by publick Instructions, and to bind Subjection and Obedience by the sacred Tye of Oaths upon their Consciences; as thinking without these religious Helps, their Office would be *precarious and insupportable*.

Hence therefore we learn, that the truly honest and conscientious Persons are the real Support, and best Security of every Government; because *they* act upon steady Principles, and do not shift and change, as their Passions or little Interests lead them; as is observable in too many amongst us, that move, as it were, *mechanically*, just as they find some strong *Impulse* laid upon them from external Causes. Whereas the Man of Conscience is never in danger of such Varietys in *his* Manners; because he acts by Virtue's unchangeable Reasons: Which way soever Interest or Party incline; Let the Prince frown or smile, 'tis all one; he keeps his pace, steady and uniform to the End.

This is one Instance, amongst a great many that I could name, to shew you that

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This is one Instance, amongst a great many that I could name, to shew you that

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the *Christian Religion* is a great Friend to civil Government, having founded the Obedience of the Subject upon that firm and steady Principle of CONSCIENCE, I shall only add

2. That Government is also much assisted by the Christian Religion, as we are given to understand, that *the Powers that be* [or are found existing] *are ordained of God*, and that the divine Providence hath placed Governors his Deputys and Ministers in that high Station, for the *Benefit and Advantage* of those that obey. *He is the Minister of God to thee for good*, saith the Apostle. That is to say, He is the Instrument, that God is pleased to employ for the Welfare and Government of Mankind; And for that purpose hath derived his Authority upon all lawful Power to govern men according to his own Laws of *just* and *right*; that Subjects may thereby be more strongly obliged to obey.

Thus when a Man is once assured, that the most high God rules in the World, and hath constituted a sovereign Power in all Kingdoms to keep Peace and Order, and

to

to enforce the Rules of moral Goodness, he cannot think it either burthensome or unreasonable to obey.

Indeed, to look upon our Governors as divested of all divine Authority, *this* will naturally take off the Force of the Obligation, as well as the Pleasure of Obedience; But when it is considered, that they are the Ministers of God's Providence; that they derive their Authority from Heaven; that they act by a special Commission from *the King of kings and Lord of lords*, in order to *rule men justly in the Fear of God*, *this* must needs render Obedience *pleasant, comfortable, and easy*.

And yet this is the true plain Christian Doctrine, which has been made so very offensive, by those absurd Schemes of *absolute Power* and *uncontrollable Dominion*, which have been of late advanced by the Patrons of *secular* and *spiritual* Tyranny, over the *Libertys* and *Consciences* of Mankind. For alas, though Christianity is the greatest Friend to Government, by deriving all Authority from Heaven; yet God has no where given Leave that his divine Commission should

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should be pleaded for *Tyranny*, either in (b) Church or State; the Scripture (as far as I can learn) never supporting any such Pretensions, nor justifying any such illegal and usurp'd Authority.

Our Saviour and his Apostles do indeed, upon all Occasions, enforce the Duty of Submission and Obedience to *Governors*; But no otherwise, than by general Rules and Exhortations; And indeed from the very same Motives, that they enforce Obedience to *Parents* and *Masters*; without Excluding the Supposition, that extraordinary cases may dissolve the Relation; that even good men may wish and pray for the Removal of wicked Tyrants, taking *that* for a merciful Providence, that delivers them from them.

(b) *What sort of spiritual Tyranny has been exercised over the Consciences of Mankind under a pretended Commission from Jesus Christ I need not say to those, who have read the History of the Reformation. Nay it is to be observed, that though Christ's Kingdom is plainly not of this World, nor upheld by temporal Rewards and Punishments; yet such Doctrines have of late been advanced by the Revivers of absolute Dominion, and an Ecclesiastical Hierarchy; (not under the Notion of Infallibility, but under the weaker pretence of being always in the right) that one cannot forbear thinking, Popery under a disguise is making its last Struggles in this part at least of the Christian World.*

I could give several (c) other Instances, wherein it would appear, that the Sword of the Magistrate is marvelously assisted by the Principles of the Christian Religion: but I chuse to draw to a Conclusion by saying only a word or two to the other Part of my Text. *viz.*

II. Besides a plain Concession of power in Magistrates, there is a further Explication of that Authority; *He beareth not the Sword in vain.* But even here I have already in great measure anticipated my purpose. For if there be a Sword put into the Hand of the Magistrate, as an Ensign of Power and Authority delegated from God, we cannot conceive, but it must be for the *Exercise* of power; not *in vain*, but for good ends and purposes: *For the punishment of evil Doers, and for the praise of them that do well*, saith the Apostle: And again; *He is the Minister of God to Thee for Good.*

However, because there are some Instances, wherein it may be thought this Power would be very *properly* and *seasonably*

(c) *Those several other Instances will be mentioned particularly in a Treatise Of Christian Prudence, not yet published.*

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Exercised, I shall crave leave to offer them to your Consideration, and trespass upon your Patience no longer.

First, I suppose you All agree with me, that 'twould be a noble End of the Magistrate's power, if he could suppress, or at least give a Check to that open Prophane-ness and Immorality, too too visible in most populous Places. A scandalous Prophanation of the Lord's Day; Cursing and Swearing in the Streets; Leud Songs and Drunkenness: These things, let them not be once heard, or seen, or named among you, as becometh Christians. And indeed one cannot forbear to hope, that, whilst there is a Christian Magistrate that *bears a Sword*, and (which is a very material Circumstance) wants not *Courage to draw it* in defence of God's Honour, we should no longer hear of such daring Immoralities, so dishonourable to all Societys.

Secondly, Because some Men's minds are leavened with a bitter Zeal, destructive to the very Being of Society, and dangerous to settled Order and Government, as it breaks out into Sedition and Rebellion under

der the absurd Pretences of the *hereditary* and *indefeazible* Rights of Princes, it will always be thought Wisdom in any Government to convince *Such*, that the *Magistrate bears not the Sword in vain*.

It alters not the Case, that these Disturbers of a Nation's quiet, are led on by those, that boldly claim an Ecclesiastical Authority for sowing the Seeds of Sedition, and pretend to an *absolute independent Superiority* over the civil Magistrate : Because these haughty Claims are intirely contrary to the *Nature* of the Christian Institution, which (as I have shewn) in the strongest Terms, requires Submission to the civil Power, in the Clergy as well as Laity. For though Disobedience to spiritual Governors, in things of a spiritual Nature, be a heinous Crime in the Sight of God ; yet even spiritual Governors themselves, when they leave the *pure* and *peaceable* Laws of Christ, to disturb the State with secular and political Principles, must expect to feel its Resentment, and be convinced by Experience, that they are *Subjects* to the civil Power.

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In truth, no greater Scandal can be derived upon the Christian Religion, than for any of its Members (especially the Ministers thereof) to give Occasion to the civil Power to guard against riotous Principles and Practices. Accordingly we find, the Adversarys to Christianity of old could find no such effectual Calumny to expose and defame it, as this; *That it was an Enemy to the civil Government*; (d) wisely enough concluding, that could they but infuse into men a Belief of this Scandal, nothing could possibly raise an higher Averfion in Mankind against it, nor render it more base and infamous in the Opinion of the World. Wherefore I cannot but think, that [in some respects] Faction under a Pretence of Religion is more dangerous to Society, and a greater Reproach to Christianity, than even Prophaneness and open Impiety.

Lastly, *Peace and Unanimity* being such great Supports to any Government, and such becoming Characters among Christians, I should be wanting, if I did not add,

(d) Vide Just. Mart. Apolog. II.

that it would be a noble Exercise of Authority, if it could any way be instrumental to suppress Opprobrious Language, Animositys and Quarrels, and to encourage and promote the contrary Virtues of Peace, Love, and Benevolence.

Indeed it is very melancholly to consider the present State of Christianity amongst us; whilst those odious Party-Names are kept up, and apply'd to particular Persons, even to good Men on both Sides, with the utmost Venome and Rancour.

I will not take upon me to enquire, how far the Scandal of applying these hateful Names to particular Persons may call for the real Exercise of the Magistrate's Authority: But this I may say, that if there is not some Stop put to this Evil in time, we can expect nothing else but a visible Decay of true Religion amongst us, and to have the very Vitals thereof, P U R I T Y and P E A C E, eaten out by Party-names and Distinctions.

God grant that every one of us in our several Stations, especially Ministers and Magistrates, may do our Utmost to suppress

press this growing Evil, and study to pro-
mote Peace and Holiness in Others, that
it may not be said *We preach, nor they*
bear the Sword of Authority in vain.

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even to do it in on both sides with the

I will not suppose the doctrine, how
for the scandal of applying these things
I am to particular persons may call for

THE END.

of the Religion amongst us, and to have
the very Vitals thereof, P U R I T Y and
P E A C E, owned out by Party names and
Distinctions.

God grant that every one of us in our
several Stations, especially Ministers and
Magistrates, may do our Utmost to keep
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